

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims 1 and 2 in accordance with the following:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for regenerating ~~the~~a NOx catalyst in a NOx purifying system having a direct reduction type NOx catalyst provided in ~~the~~an exhaust passage ~~with a direct reduction type NOx catalyst which~~and directly ~~decomposes~~decomposing the NOx during a lean condition operation and ~~is~~being regenerated during a rich condition operation, comprising ~~the step of, prohibiting the~~a rich condition control when the temperature detected by a catalyst temperature ~~detecting means~~detector is greater than a set temperature which is within a predetermined temperature range of between 400°C and 500°C.

2. (Currently Amended) A NOx purifying system direct reduction type NOx catalyst provided in ~~the~~an exhaust gas passage ~~with a direct reduction type NOx catalyst which~~and directly ~~decomposes~~decomposing the NOx ~~in the exhaust gas~~ during a lean condition operation and ~~is~~being regenerated during a rich condition operation, ~~comprising~~which comprises a catalyst temperature ~~detecting means~~detector, and a control device ~~for controlling~~ to prohibit ~~the~~a rich condition control when the temperature detected by ~~said~~the catalyst temperature ~~detecting means~~detector is greater than a set temperature which is within a predetermined temperature range of between 400°C and 500°C.

3. (New) A method for regenerating a direct reduction type NOx catalyst provided in an exhaust passage, comprising:

detecting the direct reduction type NOx catalyst temperature; and

regenerating the NOx while performing a rich condition operation only when the detected temperature is less than a set temperature which is between 400°C and 500°C.

4. (New) A NO_x purifying system having a direct reduction type NO_x catalyst provided in an exhaust passage, comprising:
 - a catalyst temperature detector detecting a temperature of the direct reduction type NO_x catalyst; and
 - a control device causing a rich condition control to be performed only when the temperature detected by the catalyst temperature detector is less than a set temperature which is between 400°C and 500°C.